

VII. 9

Leicester, March 26. 1871.

Dear friend Webb,

You seem to think you are writing often to us; but it doesn't so appear to us. We are always glad to see your 'hand' on a letter. What a wilderness of waters the poor things have to cross every time! Our regular, constant, almost daily intercourse by steam mail-repels, is really very wonderful; but we accept it as a matter of course! What would Dr. Johnson, for instance, have said of such doings? What kind of speech might Edmund Burke have brought to bear upon it? Which reminds me of a very queer (caricature) picture of Burke in one of the vols. of Chas. Knight's Illustrated History of England. Have you ever seen that picture? It represents him in the act of casting down on the floor of the Ho. of Commons ^{his own} the Salver, ~~which he had~~, ^{about which if not real, was surely wellfounded.} He cuts a queer figure enough. — There is a very pleasant article in the April "Atlantic" by Edmund Quincy, — on Count Rumford. Believe you never heard of him! He was a clapp'd Yankee, — born about 10 m. N.E. West of Boston, mid. of last century; — sided with the Eng. part during the troubles preceding the War of the Revolution (1776-83), rather thro' force of circumstances, I think, than any very strong feeling of his own either way, — got out of the Country, & spent the rest of his life in Europe, — partly in England, but mostly in Bavaria. The Elector of B. took him up warmly, promoted him, and at a favourable moment made him a Count. He seems to have really been a very useful man, at Munich, in many ways. In the latter part of his life he married the widow of the noted French Chemist Lavoisier, but did not live happily with her, ^{they} separated, — & he died near Paris, 1814. He endowed a Professorship at Harvard Coll. Cambridge, & in many other ways shew'd attachment to his native land. His name was Benjamin Thompson — pronice enough surely, & giving little promise of Countships, or the like; — but he was a handsome man!

Your note reach'd me on the 22^d. At same time
came from you one of Mrs. May's "journals", which had
your initials, & Deborah's, of authentication. I dare say
you noticed it was not a continuation of the No. 1., which
you had, I sent us, many weeks ago. No. 2. is somewhere
on the way, I have heard. A friend of Mary Howitt took it
from Mr. May, in Rome, about Feb. 15th, - W. H. kindly
undertaking to have it forwarded to you, which she told Mr.
M. She would like to do, for your sake. Her friend perhaps has
been detained, - possibly travelled by easy stages to England -
and so No. 3 overtook No. 2, & passed it, & reached you & us
first. No. 2. will, doubtless, cover the time from her leaving London
to her arrival at Innspruck in the Tyrol. We hear from
her about once a week on an average. - I see that
the Spine is now advancing well upon you, tho' slowly; with
her it began before the mid. of February & was rapidly
making up for the atrocious weather she had in Rome for
about six weeks, with scarce any pleasant days.

Ade. (who will write you too by this packet) is much
better of her cold & throat-trouble, though she maintains she
has not yet got over ^{the} cold which more or less has plagued her
this winter. She will tell you how far you are likely to
~~have~~ get a photograph of Besbie. Indeed I have no objection
to your having one; but just now there seem to be no such
things. You certainly have quite a gallery of American
Cartes. Do you like Stereoscop. pictures? Did you take home
any American ones? I know you took some Lohomos.

We are not feeling pleasantly just now about,
or towards, Pres. Grant. But, for myself, I don't blame him
nearly so much as I blame the Senate. It was wholly
in their power to say whether the Pres.'s wishes, or orders,
as to Senate arrangements, should govern them or not.
They have chosen to lower the dignity & honorable standing
of the Senate, which the Pres. was powerless to do; & an

them the whole responsibility rests; and they took for it
the most unsuitable time possible, - when the British
Commissioners were recently arrived at Washington, & were
looking on to see this subservient act, wh. they might well
interpret as being a peace-offering to their side of the question;
and that does not suit our way of thinking here about at all,
- The next week after it happen'd, the Election in New Hampshire
went against the Republicans, - for the first time in 16 years -
and is believed to have so happened wholly on account of the
disgust felt at the treatment of W. Sumner, and at the
President's obstinate purpose to "annex" (I) half an island of
the West Indies to the United States, - which "annexion" W. S.
has vehemently opposed from the first; - I will continue to do so.
The Commissioners sent out by Congress to investigate the
matter have just got back, & will make their Report to Congress
probably before the end of this week, and you will know the gist
of it before you get this, long enough, I daubt not.

Won't you come over this summer & see how Leicester
celebrates its 150th birth-day? It proposes to do that thing
on the great National Anniversary, the 4th of July. We are
to have an Oration, a Poem, a Dinner, and various Festivities
- and we should like to have you with us, though we shant
venture to pronounce on any special entertainment or edification
from the proceedings. We will make you "at home" if you
will come; and shall be right glad to see Deborah too.

Your pen-portrait of S.S. & A.K.F. is very good. They
are indefatigable stirrers-up of the public feelings, and
woful destructors of the public's self-complacency about
anything. You should have been with us at a County
Temperance Meeting, in an adjoining town, about 3 weeks
ago, when Stephen trumped & thundered vigorously for a
long time, when a few questions & a brief statement from a
fellow-traveller "took him aback", the worst I have ever
known happen to him, - who usually extricates himself,
with credit & even glory, out of the most unpromising
circumstances, and the worst dilemma's.

If your U. S. Bonds are "5-20's" of a date which allows the Govt. to redeem them now, at any time they choose, I should think it well ~~except~~ to exchange them - or sell, & place the proceeds elsewhere. Still I have not myself done so yet with the very small amount I have in such securities. I have a larger amount in Bonds of 1881, which cannot be paid off until that year. I am not sufficiently versed in these financial matters to be willing to advise people how or where to place their money. I don't think I should go to Mr. Bowen of the "Independent" either, as my Mentor; and I don't say so from any knowledge I have concerning his qualifications, or the reverse, on the subject. I sometimes go to Mr. Wm. Endicott in Boston, (one of the late C. H. Hovey's partners) for advice, - or rather information, for he too is loth to advise. - I think him a man careful, judicious, and far-seeing. The recent work, in which I have had the chief part, in the settlement & division of my father's estate, has obliged me to look into such questions more often than formerly. And while I shouldn't be willing to advise you as to investments, I am still entirely ready & shall be very glad to serve you in any way, therewith connected, that I can.

I really cannot, of myself, say whether you could sell, or exchange, your bonds as well in Dublin as here, but should doubt it. - (I mean for American investments.) There are some New England & New York Railroads which are paying eight per cent, & can be bought at par, or a very little advance. I recently bought, at 101, as an investment for my mother, Six Bonds (of \$1000. each) of such a Road, - or Series of roads, paying 8%, and I know they are esteemed by very judicious men to be perfectly safe, & sure as anything human can be; and knew that Mr. Endicott thinks some Western roads are equally sure & good, which can be bought several percent. less, ^{grade} than an equally good income.

Boston is extensively interested in a grand Fair to raise money for the relief of the French people, - with all sorts of side entertainments, & auxiliary fairs in neighboring towns; and I reckon the total amount will be a good one.

Affectionately yours. L. C. A.

P.S.

In one of your notes you spoke of your intent to send a news-y note you had just got from H. J. G. to Mrs. May, and it was like you to think of it —
Something ^{to do} Just that thing I am going to ask you ^{to do} with this of mine, for I have really no time to write her, myself, by this mail, & this to you has so much local & home matter in it that it will very well take the place of any other I c^d. write. Beside, Bessie had been intending to be the scribe this week, but extra home-care (on acc^t. of Ade's illness), & an engagement to help get our Town Hall ready for a Charitable Fair, tomorrow & next day, - whether she has gone for all this morning, - prevent her writing. So, will you please enclose mine, if you see fit, addressed (you doubtless have it correct, but I will repeat.) to Mrs. S. May, care Bowles, Brothers & Co., 449 Strand, Charing Cross, London; & they will forward it.

- I laid aside this news-p^c. slip, ^{for you,} touching the Saving Banks of the State of Massachusetts only. Think of a

— near \$25,000,000 —

capital of some ~~125~~ millions of Dollars, accumulated
in the single State by the laboring, working, & small-mico
people thereof. Such is the fact. Their united savings,
which are placed and loaned only upon the most
undoubted securities, form a sure fund for themselves,
while it is an immense force employed for great prowa
advantage & public improvements. { I have to take the ship out,
much weight; but you have substance in my bank.

My boys are both quite well - Edward still
at the Navy Yard - nearly 2 yrs. of his time there having
expired. Russell still at his old breviary-post. It is St
climbing however for young men. I hope Richard
enjoying, and is to profit by, his voyaging. - Old J.
Emerson remains much the same. One day last week he
said "it was the longest day he ever knew in his life." If
steamboat or rail road accident he hears of, he inquires if
Mary was in it, & hopes she "will get back alive."
others at that house much as usual - Miss A. E. Partridge has
over to see Ade. this morng, but she is herself quite thin & delicate